

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-13 by rewriting same to read as follows:

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--1. (Amended) An audio signal processing method for performing [the] a process for decoding [the] supplied data [supplied], comprising the steps of:

[wherein it is detected] detecting whether zero data continues for a predetermined period of time in [the] said supplied data[,];

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[wherein in the case where] determining, when zero data continue for said predetermined period of time, [it is determined] that [the] said supplied data are compressed audio data [are involved,] and

[wherein the process for] performing a decoding [the] operation on said supplied data [is performed].

--2. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing method [as] described in claim 1, wherein upon detection that zero data continue for said predetermined period of time, [the decode process] said decoding is performed by switching [the] said supplied data to [the decode process] said decoding operation based on the sync signal of [the] said supplied data.

--3. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing method

[as] described in claim 1, wherein [in the case where] when zero data continuing for said predetermined period of time is not detected, it is determined that [the] said supplied data are non-compressed audio data [is involved], and [the decode process] said decoding operation is performed.

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a' --4. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing method [as] described in claim 3, wherein said supplied audio data are stored for said predetermined period during which it is detected whether [the] said zero data continue [or not], and [in the where] when it is determined that [the] said supplied data are non-compressed audio data [is involved], the result of decoding [the] said supplied audio data is output following the result of decoding [the] said stored audio data [stored].

--5. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing method [as] described in claim 1, wherein the output of [the data decoded] said decoding operation is muted for said predetermined period of time during which it is detected whether zero data continue for said predetermined period of time.

--6. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing method [as] described in claim 1, wherein [in the case where the] when said data supplied during said decode operation are continuous zero data, the operation [is performed again] for detecting whether [the] said zero data continue for said

predetermined period of time is repeated.

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--7. (Amended) An audio signal processing apparatus comprising:

detection means for detecting whether zero data continue for a predetermined period of time in [the] supplied data[,];

determining means for determining that said supplied data is [the] compressed audio data [in the case where] when the result of detection by said detection means [has] is that zero data [continuing] continues for said predetermined period of time[,]; and

a' [decode] decoding means for decoding [the] said supplied data based on the result of said determination [in] by said determining means.

--8. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing apparatus [as] described in claim 7, wherein [in the case where] when said detection means detects that zero data continue for said predetermined period of time, said [decode] decoding means switches to [the decode process] said decoding based on the sync signal of said supplied data, and decodes said supplied data.

--9. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing apparatus [as] described in claim 8, wherein said determining means determines that [the] said supplied data are non-compressed audio data [is involved in the case where] when zero data are

not detected continuously for said predetermined period of time.

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--10. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing apparatus [as] described in claim 9, wherein said [decode] decoding means includes a memory for storing said supplied audio data for said predetermined period of time during which it is determined whether [the] zero data are continuously detected [or not], and [in the case where] when it is determined that said supplied data are non-compressed audio data [is involved], said audio signal processing apparatus outputs the [output] data decoded from said supplied data following the output data decoded by said decode means from said audio data stored in said memory.

--11. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing apparatus [as] described in claim 7, further comprising muting means for muting the output of [the decoded data output] said decoding means for said predetermined period of time during which it is detected whether zero data continue.

--12. (Amended) [An] The audio signal processing apparatus [as] described in claim 11, wherein [the mute] operation of said muting means is canceled [with] at the start of [the decode operation of] decoding by said [decode] decoding means.